

Dear SIC Members and Supporters:

This issue of *SIC Clips & Quips* (Volume 4, Issue 6) is sent to share information of special interest to our state's School Improvement Councils.

Baron DeKalb Elementary SIC Named 2012 SC-SIC Riley Award Winner – At The SC-SIC Annual Meeting and Awards Celebration March 24 in Columbia (attended by over 150 SIC members and others from across the state), the SIC of Baron DeKalb Elementary School (Kershaw County School District) received the 2012 Dick and Tunky Riley Award for SIC Excellence. The award was presented by special guest former SC Governor and US Secretary of Education Dick Riley. Honorable Mention awards were presented to Riley Award finalists Blythe Academy of Languages SIC (Greenville County Schools); Burton-Pack Elementary SIC (Richland District One); Jennie Moore Elementary SIC (Charleston County School District); and Port Royal Elementary SIC (Beaufort County School District). Congratulations to these SICs for their outstanding work. Photos and other information from the 2012 Annual Meeting can be viewed on the SC-SIC website, <http://sic.sc.gov>.

Remember – 2011-12 SIC Reports to the Parents to be published by April 30 – It's that time of year again for local SICs to produce and publish their annual *SIC Report to the Parents*. This *Report*, mandated by state law to be distributed by April 30, is to be written by local SICs to outline their work and accomplishments, as well as progress on SIC and school goals for the current school year. Examples and templates for these *Reports* are available on the SC-SIC website, <http://sic.sc.gov>. Local SICs are also to upload an electronic PDF copy of their *Report* to the "SC-SIC Member Network" by June 1. If you have questions or need assistance, contact the SC-SIC office at 1-800-868-2232 or email SC-SIC Public Information Director Claudia Wolverton at wolverto@mailbox.sc.edu.

State House Update – What follows are a number of items of note compiled from various sources:

- The SC House of Representatives was on furlough the weeks of April 2 and April 9. The SC Senate was on furlough the week of April 2.
- On April 11, the Senate K-12 Education Subcommittee reviewed several bills. **S1267** (District Choice Program and Open Enrollment Program) would establish a school district choice program and provide for public school open enrollment across district lines. The subcommittee amended the bill to allow districts with established choice programs to be exempt or fall in a different tier under the bill; allow local school boards to determine district capacity for open enrollment; and eliminate the need for an Office of School Choice at the SC Department of Education. The bill received a favorable report as amended and was sent to the full Senate Education Committee. **S1314** (School Terms) would allow any local school board to begin a school year no more than one week earlier than the current start date mandated in statute, no earlier than the second Monday in August. This bill was carried over. **H3035** (Length of School Term) would allow local districts to establish its calendar based on the statutory term of 180 instructional days or the equivalent number of hours. This bill was also carried over.
- On April 12, the Senate K-12 Education Finance Subcommittee began reviewing budget provisos for the 2012-13 year, and will continue the process this week.
- On April 13, a joint resolution, **H4905**, to delay the issuance of teacher contracts from April 15 to May 15 was ratified in the Senate and signed by Gov. Haley on April 14. The joint resolution also included other items. In this resolution, teachers will have 10 days from receipt of notice to inform their districts of acceptance. Continuing contract teachers recommended for formal evaluation in the following school year must receive written notification of such on/before the date of written offer of employment or reemployment by their districts. Under the resolution, districts uniformly may negotiate salaries below their salary schedules for 2012-13 for retired teachers not in the TERI program.

- On April 17, the House Ways and Means Property Tax Subcommittee will again debate **H4610** (School Bus Privatization/Decentralization). This bill, among numerous details, would transfer school bus transportation service from the state to districts, along with state-owned bus maintenance facilities, July 1, 2013. Districts not wishing to provide transportation themselves would be required to solicit proposals from private entities to begin service no later than 2015-16. An amendment adopted by the subcommittee would strike the original content of the bill and insert new language.
- It's anticipated that the Senate Finance Committee will begin debate on the 2012-13 budget beginning April 24, with the full Senate to begin the budget debate on May 15. Of particular interest will be the 2012-13 allocation for the Base Student Cost (BSC).
- On March 29, prior to its two-week furlough, the House passed – by a vote of 65-49 – a tuition tax credit/voucher plan, **H4894**, that would provide income tax deductions for home schooling costs (up to \$2,000), private school tuition (up to \$4,000), and tuition for students attending public schools outside their home district (up to \$1,000). The bill would also provide dollar-for-dollar tax credits on state income tax, insurance premium taxes or bank license fees for contributions made to a non-profit scholarship funding organizations that would provide grants to eligible children to attend qualifying independent schools. Some have projected that the bill would remove \$37 million from the state's general fund in its first year of implementation. The bill has been sent on to the Senate, which has a companion bill, **S1325**.

Full details on the text and history of the bills listed here (as well as other legislation and other items of interest) are available on the South Carolina Legislature's website, www.scstatehouse.gov.

Remember, *SIC Clips & Quips* is sent to all SIC members and supporters who share their email addresses with us. Please feel free to print out and share this information with fellow SIC members who may not have received it. We are here to help you, so please contact us any time!

TFH

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